

and also enjoyed modelling clay activities and a story corner."

Salon raises hospice cash

● CUSTOMERS at a hair salon enjoyed tea and cake in the name of charity.

Staff at the Honeycomb salon, in Fobbing Road, Corringham, baked cakes and organised a raffle to raise more than £400 for Little Havens Children's Hospice. Organiser Elaine Rogocki said: "We had a great day and the sun was shining. Local businesses contributed a selection of raffle prizes and it was an enormous success."

Bicycle thief in court

● A MAN has appeared in court, accused of stealing a bicycle.

Johnny Bruce, 20 of Malyons, sea is charged with stealing a £260 bike in Basildon on March 25.

Bruce entered no plea when he appeared at Basildon Magistrates' Court. He was freed on conditional bail, to return to court on June 30.

● A TRAVELLER has asked for planning permission to improve his pitch on a caravan site. John Gray has applied to Basildon Council to subdivide Oakview, in Cranfield Park Close, off the A127 near Nevendon, to create a day room, and space for an extra caravan and parking.

● AVELEY Patients' Participation Liaison Executive is meeting on Monday, June 28, from 7pm, at Aveley Methodist Church, in Shannon Way, Aveley.

● CROOKS caused £50 damage when they tried unsuccessfully to force their way into a house in Chadwell Road, Grays sometime between 11.45am and 1pm on Tuesday.

A US visitor's view of life at Dale Farm

By JON AUSTIN
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THE latest American graduate to dig in alongside travellers facing eviction from the huge unauthorised Dale Farm campsite is posting an internet blog about her experiences.

Susan Craig-Green is the third American visitor since 2007 to spend time at Dale Farm on behalf of the Washington-based Advocacy Project.

The human rights organisation sends representatives across the globe to work with what it sees as vulnerable people whose rights are under threat.

Ms Craig-Green is working with about 90 families at Crays Hill, helping them to mount legal challenges and improve their literacy levels.

The Oklahoma State University international relations graduate is running a literacy project for adults and secondary school-age children at the site, using traditional teaching methods, computers and the internet.

She is also advising them on legal and homelessness issues connected to the threatened eviction by Basildon Council. A keen photographer, she is posting pictures of Dale Farm residents online as part of a blog about her time with the travellers.

In her latest post, earlier this week, she suggests the travellers' only hope of avoiding eviction is for them to engage with villagers living nearby.

She writes: "There may be no protec-

tion from eviction while they pursue other legal avenues unless their neighbours can be encouraged to engage with the travellers, recognise their humanity, and the fundamental rights that go with it, and support their residence at Dale Farm."

She also highlights fears among the Dale Farm community and the deteriorating condition of the site as eviction looms.

She adds: "I fear, as the travellers do, the traveller community will be scattered across the country, separating families and creating yet more obstacles to them exercising their traditional way of life."

"They are uncertain every night whether or not they will be evicted from their homes in the morning, which causes them much worry and strain."

"Due to this uncertain situation, they have therefore not developed any sort of permanent relationship with their environment and much of the site is dilapidated and in disarray."

"The travellers at Dale Farm remain strong and dignified, despite their precarious living situation, overt prejudice from their neighbours and their ongoing struggle to preserve their way of life in a society designed for settled, literate people."



Support - American visitor Susan Craig-Green

The travellers remain strong and dignified, despite their precarious living situation, overt prejudice from their neighbours, and struggle to preserve their way of life in a society designed for settled, literate people

Town council 'green day'

AN ECO-friendly council is organising a "green day" this weekend to encourage residents to think more about the environment.

Billerica Town Council wants to get townspeople thinking about ways to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions and global warming.

The event will be opened by MP John Baron and feature stalls offering advice on home heating, how to save electricity and recycling.

A series of talks in the afternoon will include one on Basildon Council's new

garden waste recycling scheme. There will also be fun, activities, including a fancy-dress competition and the performance of a green poem by Sunnymede Infant School choir.

The town council will also ask residents to sign up to its ten challenges - pledges to do simple things such as turning off lights when they leave rooms and not to leave the water running when brushing their teeth.

The event is at Emmanuel Church, in Laindon Road, Billericay, from 11am until 4pm on Saturday.



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